

## **NIMH CONSTITUENCY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION PROGRAM**

### **ANXIETY DISORDERS SCIENTIFIC UPDATE TELECONFERENCE**

**September 20, 2001**

On Thursday, September 20, the National Institute of Mental Health conducted a 90-minute scientific update teleconference on anxiety disorders for the 51 Constituency Outreach and Education Program (COEP) participants, representing every State, and the District of Columbia.

The discussion, which focused on some of the most critical issues relating to panic disorder and social anxiety disorder, was led by

- Jack Gorman, M.D., Lieber Professor and Vice Chair for Research in the Department of Psychiatry at Columbia University, and
  - Jerilyn Ross, M.A., L.I.C.S.W., President and CEO of the Anxiety Disorders Association of America,
- and was moderated by Elaine Baldwin, Director of COEP.

The following Web sites, references, ideas, and resources are provided to the Outreach Partners for outreach efforts in their States.

#### ***Information Dissemination Tip Sheet***

Anxiety disorders are serious medical illnesses that affect approximately 19 million adults in the United States. These disorders fill people's lives with overwhelming anxiety and fear. Unlike the relatively mild, brief anxiety caused by a stressful event such as a business presentation or a first date, anxiety disorders are chronic and relentless and can grow progressively worse if not treated.

Anxiety disorders include panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, social phobia (or social anxiety disorder), specific phobias, and generalized anxiety disorder. Treatments have been largely developed through research conducted by NIMH and other research institutions. Effective treatments often combine medication and specific types of psychotherapy. Research has shown that behavioral therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy can be effective for treating several of the anxiety disorders.

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## Annotated Bibliography: A Sampling of NIMH Publications Online

- *Anxiety Disorders*, a brochure providing information on the symptoms, causes, and effective treatments, and how to work with a doctor or therapist to obtain treatment; also suggests ways to make treatment more effective.  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/anxiety.cfm>
- Anxiety Disorders Research at the National Institute of Mental Health  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/anxresfact.cfm>  
A fact sheet that provides information on research progress and the search for better treatments for anxiety disorders.
- Anxiety Disorders: Where to Get Help  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/anxiety/referral/mho.htm>  
A list of mental health organizations that can help you find more information about anxiety disorders and where to find referral information.
- Medication Effective in Treating Anxiety Disorders in Children and Adolescents—Questions and Answers  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/events/ruppqa.cfm>  
Supplements a press release issued on April 25, 2001.
- NIMH Press Release: Medication Effective in Treating Anxiety Disorders in Children and Adolescents  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/events/prrupp.cfm>  
Announces findings from a multisite study to evaluate treatments published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, April 26, 2001.
- NIMH Press Release: Anxiety Disorders Treatment Target: Amygdala Circuitry  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/events/pranxst.cfm>  
Announces a series of research reports from basic and clinical scientists on the brain circuits coursing through the amygdala as holding promise as targets for treating anxiety disorders. Released December 15, 1998.  
— To view a picture of the human brain showing the amygdala, click on the following site: [http://www.sfn.org/backgrounders/cerebellum\\_large.gif](http://www.sfn.org/backgrounders/cerebellum_large.gif)
- Does This Sound Like You?  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/soundlikeyou.htm>  
Provides brief descriptions of anxiety disorders.
- Facts About Anxiety Disorders  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/adfacts.cfm>  
Provides descriptions of the different kinds of anxiety disorders, prevalence, effective treatments, and a quiz about anxiety disorders.

- Facts about Panic Disorder  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/panicfacts.cfm>  
 A fact sheet that provides information on causes, treatment, and coexisting conditions.
- Facts about Social Phobia  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/phobiafacts.cfm>  
 A fact sheet that provides information on social phobia (also called social anxiety), prevalence of the disorder, causes, treatment, and other co-occurring illnesses.
- Getting Treatment for Panic Disorder  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/getpd.cfm>  
 A brochure for people who want to find out whether they or someone they know may have panic disorder and how it can be treated most effectively. Simple, easy to read descriptions of cognitive behavior therapy are a feature.
- When Fear Holds Sway  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/fearandtrauma.cfm>  
 A brief fact sheet from the, Science on Our Minds Series that provides information about panic disorder, treatment, and research findings. (Also available in PDF format.)
- Panic Disorder Treatment and Referral  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/pdtr.cfm>  
 A brochure for health care professionals that provides information on symptoms, diagnosis, causes, treatment methods, referrals to mental health professionals, how to talk to patients about panic disorder, and sources for more information.
- Anxiety Disorders: Real Illnesses  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/realillness.cfm>  
 This series is designed for those who need information written in easy-to-understand language.
  - Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD), A Real Illness  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/gadri1.cfm>  
 To find out if you may suffer from GAD, answer the questions provided in the following quiz: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/gadri2.cfm>
  - Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), A Real Illness  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/ocdri1.cfm>  
 To find out if you may suffer from OCD, answer the questions provided in the following quiz: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/ocdri2.cfm>
  - Panic Disorder, A Real Illness  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/panri1.cfm>

To find out if you may suffer from panic disorder, answer the questions provided in the following quiz: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/panri2.cfm>

- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), A Real Illness

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/ptsdri1.cfm>

To find out if you may suffer from PTSD, answer the questions provided in the following quiz: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/ptsdri2.cfm>

- Social Phobia, A Real Illness

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/sophri1.cfm>

To find out if you may suffer from social phobia, answer the questions provided in the following quiz: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/sophri2.cfm>

## Materials for Putting Research into Action

NIMH communicates with the public and health professionals about anxiety disorders through a wide range of materials, including:

- Toll-free information lines (1-888-8-ANXIETY [1-888-826-9438] and 1-800-64-PANIC [1-800-647-2642]) that provide callers with free printed materials on panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, social phobia, and specific phobias.
- Brochures and other print and audiovisual materials for the public, health care providers, and mental health professionals on diagnosis, treatment, and referral of patients with anxiety disorders that can be found at <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/anxietymenu.cfm>.
- *Facts about the Anxiety Disorders Education Program*, developed to increase awareness among the public and health care professionals that anxiety disorders are real medical illnesses that can be effectively diagnosed and treated. <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/adepfacts.cfm>
  - To connect to the anxiety disorders website, which offers information on communications research, objectives of the program, scientific basis of the disorders, news, library, information for professionals, information in Spanish, and TV and radio public service announcement that you can hear, click on the title, **Anxiety Disorders Education Program**, embedded in the text of the first sentence, or click on the link provided below. <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety>
  - The link for the radio and television public service announcements (PSAs) can be reached by clicking on the sentence highlighted in green: *See Our New Public Service Announcements* located at the top of the Anxiety Disorders Education Program screen, or clicking on the following link: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/psas/index.htm>. Although these PSAs can no longer be broadcast, the following section provides ideas on how to use them for outreach activities.

## **Ideas for Promoting Science-Based Information on Anxiety Disorders**

The following are some practical ways to increase the awareness of the public and health care professionals that anxiety disorders are real illnesses that can be effectively diagnosed and treated.

- Send the script from the radio PSAs to radio stations to be read by a station announcer.
  - Make your own version with amateur or semiprofessional actors using the scripts.
  - Have a drama class/club or the communications department in your local community college or university make a recording and learn how to market the product to radio stations.
- Anxiety disorders quizzes can be used in local newspapers or newsletters to publicize an upcoming event or presentation on mental health. Just add your local contact information for further details.
- Work with a medical or scientific advisor to organize a professional education program on anxiety disorders that can be presented to primary care providers at the local level.
- Exhibits with posters and a seminar can be presented at State and regional professional conferences.

## **Other Resources That Offer Information on Anxiety Disorders**

- The Anxiety Disorders Association of America (ADAA) promotes the prevention and cure of anxiety disorders and works to improve the lives of all people who suffer from them. The association is made up of professionals who conduct research and treat anxiety disorders and individuals who have a personal or general interest in learning more about such disorders.  
<http://www.adaa.org>
- Freedom From Fear (FFF) is a national not-for-profit mental health advocacy association founded in 1984. The mission of FFF is to aid and counsel individuals and their families who suffer from anxiety and depressive illnesses.  
<http://www.freedomfromfear.com/about2.asp>